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DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

## SPOT COMMENTARY

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### FRY Elections Begin Amid Relative Calm, Tensions May Come Later.

Polling stations across Serbia and Montenegro opened this morning at 0500 GMT (0100 EDT). We have no reports of incidents at polling places. A media blackout remains in effect until the polls close at 1800 GMT (1400 EDT). Tensions could arise between pro-regime security forces and supporters of the democratic opposition this evening when each side is expected to proclaim victory.

- Belgrade authorities late Saturday charged that the opposition planned to declare victory before the announcement of the official results. The police in the southern city of Nis publicly informed the DOS that announcements of election results would be banned prior to an official announcement by the election commission in Belgrade. *This apparently is meant to undercut one of the opposition's main strategies.*
- Belgrade officials also instructed polling station commissions to check presidential ballot papers before they were put in the box, accusing the West and the opposition of masterminding a plan to stuff ballot boxes with votes for Kostunica, according to press. *Belgrade's allegations of Western interference could serve as a pretext to annul all or part of the election, while allowing the pro-regime commissions to vet individual ballots will permit commission members to remove opposition votes.*

In Montenegro, preliminary reports say that voting is proceeding in schools, private homes, and alternate sites due to the Djukanovic government's boycott and refusal to support the elections. Belgrade is pursuing a strategy to manipulate election results if possible.

Prepared by: The DCI Interagency Balkan Task Force. Please direct any questions or comments to

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